

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4 – 16, 18 – 26, 28 – 29, and 31 – 32 are pending in the application, of which claims 1, 4 – 14 and 31 have been allowed; claims 15 – 16, 18 – 26, 28 – 29 and 32 are presented for reconsideration and further examination in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

In the outstanding Office Action, claim 26 was objected to due to an informality; claims 15 and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. patent no. 5,669,668 to Leuchtmann (hereinafter referred to as “the Leuchtmann ‘668 patent”) and as being anticipated by U.S. patent no. 5,681,079 to Robinson (hereinafter referred to as “the Robinson ‘079 patent”); claims 1, 4 – 9 and 14 were allowed; and claims 16, 18 – 25 and 28 were deemed allowable but were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

By this Response and Amendment,

independent claim 15 is amended to recite certain of the limitations of allowable claim 16 and, as amended, the rejections thereto are traversed;

claim 16 has been amended to delete the limitations that were added to its independent claim 15; and

claims 10 – 13, 26 and 29, which were earlier indicated as being drawn toward a non-elected species, are resubmitted in view of the allowance of a generic claim.

Support for the amendment to claim 15 is found in allowable claim 16 as previously submitted; therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the above amendments introduce no new matter within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §132. It is further submitted that no further prior art searching is necessary.

Objections to Claims 16, 18 – 26 and 28

The Examiner objected to claims 16, 18 – 26 and 28. However, the Examiner indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten to contain the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response

By this Response and Amendment, claim 15 has been amended to recite the “supporting member” and “pressure receiving member” limitations of previously allowable claim 16. Claim 16 has been amended to delete these limitations and now recites: “wherein the pivotal connector rotatably supports the supporting member.” Also, claims 19, 20 and 25 have been amended to depend from claim 15. As such, claims 16 and 18 – 26 ultimately contain all of the limitations of claim 15, which now recites the “supporting member” and “pressure receiving member” limitations of allowable claim 16. Accordingly, due to the allowability of claim 16, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the outstanding objections and allow claims 16, 18 – 26 and 28.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner rejected claims 15 and 32 as being anticipated by the Leuchtmann ‘668 patent and as being anticipated by the Robinson ‘079 patent.

Response

By this Response and Amendment, independent claim 15 has been amended to recite the “pressure receiving member” and “supporting member” limitations of previously allowable claim 16.

As amended the rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claim 15 now includes the positive pressure receiving and supporting member limitations of claim 16. The Examiner has indicated that claim 16 would be allowable if rewritten to include the limitations of the base claim. By this Response and Amendment, with the exception of the limitation directed toward the pivotal connector, all of the limitations of allowable claim 16 are present in the independent claim 15. Therefore, as the Examiner has indicated that claim 16 is differentiable over the prior art, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 15 is now allowable. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the outstanding rejections to claim 15.

As the additional limitations to claim 15 were present in a previously submitted claim, no further search is necessary; and, therefore, continued examination is not necessary.

Also, since dependent claims contain all of the limitations of the independent claim from which they depend, claim 32 is allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 15. As such, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections to claim 32 is also requested.

MISCELLANEOUS

By this Response and Amendment, claims 26 and 29 are resubmitted. Claims 26 and 29 were previously withdrawn as being directed toward a non-elected invention. However, due to the arguments above with respect to generic independent claim 15, from which claims 26 and 29 ultimately depend, Applicant respectfully requests that Examiner consider claims 26 and 29 as they are patentable over the prior art for at least the same reasons as independent claim 15.

CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing, Applicant submits that the application is now in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes the application is not in condition for allowance, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner contact the undersigned attorney if it is believed that such contact will expedite the prosecution of the application.

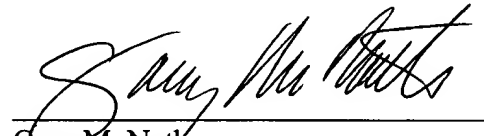
Respectfully submitted,

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Date: March 30, 2004

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